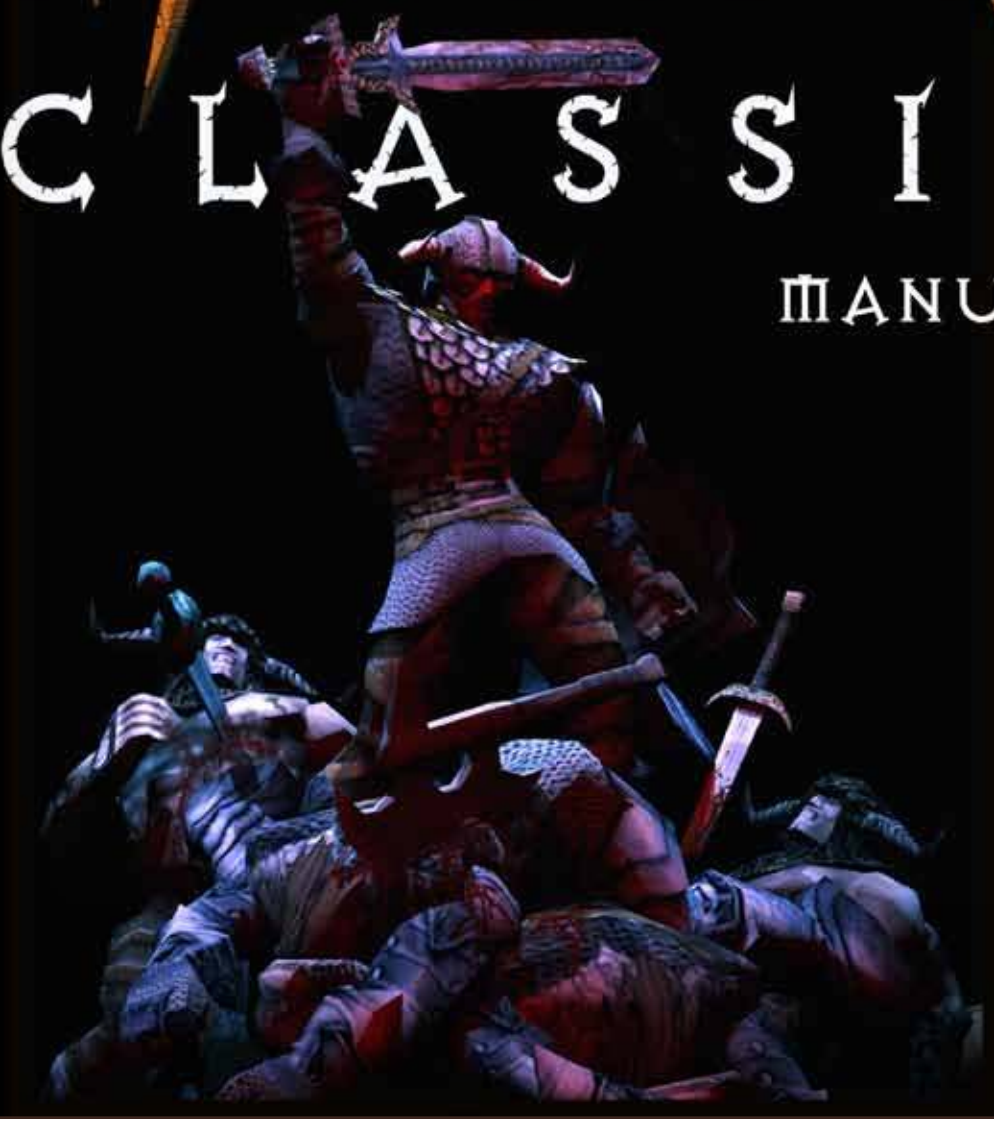
# RUNE™

## CLASSIC

## MANUAL



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# Long ago, in the time of gods and myth . . .

The old man and the girl moved slowly up the narrow and rocky pass under the watchful eyes of the sentries. "You see, child," the man murmured, "even here one can sense the coming darkness. They cannot see the armies, but they watch the birds fleeing the northern forests. They do not hear the horns, but they listen to the crash of thunder from beyond the mountains."

A viking clad in war leathers stepped forward to block their path, axe held at the ready. "Who comes?" he demanded. Behind him, another warrior wielding a short sword lifted a torch, casting flickering shadows across the stones.

The girl stepped between the old man and the vikings. "He is Bragi," she said, hands on her hips. "Storyteller to king's stronghold and village longhouse alike, singer of the Saga of Andhrimnir."

The old man laid a hand on the girl's shoulder and she fell silent. "You must pardon Jun, warrior. She is young and prone to youth's impertinence. I am indeed a skald traveling the land, and we seek only shelter from the night and its dangers." For a long moment, the viking stared at the pair from under a knitted brow. Finally he stood aside. "Well met, then. Welcome to Wotankeld." As they passed, he brandished his axe and growled, "No trouble, hear?" Jun glowered at the warrior, but the old man simply smiled, nodded, and moved up the pass.

As they continued around the bend, Jun kicked at a loose stone. Slipping into the shadows, it broke with a crack against the walls of the pass. "Why do you let him speak to you like that?" she complained. "And why are we here? The eddas will be told of great battles and terrible bloodshed, not inconsequential villages! 'Learn the craft,' you said. 'Seek out the legends!' "

The old man smiled. "Your place for now is to watch, and to listen. In doing so, you will come to understand our purpose." Wotankeld was larger than most viking villages, built in a rift between the high cliffs that surrounded it. Enormous longhouses sat side-by-side along the streets that took Jun and the old man toward its center. The entire town seemed on edge. A woman passed carrying a bucket of water, but refused to meet their eyes. When a small boy ran up to them shouting a greeting, he was quickly pulled away by his older sister.

They wandered through the settlement until a sudden burst of laughter erupted from between two longhouses. "Finally, something interesting," Jun muttered. Following the noise, she found a crowd of viking warriors who cheered and bellowed as they watched two men circle in the center of the group. The first was nearly twice Jun's height and moved with the strange grace born only in battle-experience further betrayed by

the scars on the mail that protected him. He wielded an enormous broadsword pointed unwaveringly toward his opponent, a younger man wearing only a quilted tunic and carrying a short sword in one hand while a small wooden shield covered his other arm.

As Jun watched, the young man—really little more than a boy—slid to one side then the other, weapon at the ready, then darted in to strike. The combatants traded a flurry of blows, until the larger man's broadsword came around in a sweeping arc that cracked the boy's shield and knocked him off his feet. The collected vikings roared with approving laughter, and Jun watched as the boy slowly sat up.

She shook her head and walked back to where the old man was waiting. "They may know that the darkness is coming, but if he's defending the village it'll be in deep, deep trouble." The skald smiled again. "Perhaps," he said, scratching his chin thoughtfully. "Though all too soon that boy will be the one defending not this village, but all of Midgard. . ."

## Required System

Windows XP
1 Ghz
512 MB RAM
DirectX 7.0 capable card
1 G Disk Space

## Recommended System

Windows Vista, Windows 7
2 Ghz
512 MB
DirectX 7.0 capable card
1 G Disk Space

## Part 1

"Him?" Jun said incredulously.

"His name is Ragnar," said the old man. "And he has only begun his walk down the path of destiny." The pair turned to look back at the young warrior.

Grunting as he climbed to his feet, Ragnar retrieved his sword and threw aside his splintered shield. "Sigard!" he yelled, and his massive opponent turned from where he was being congratulated. "Again!" said Ragnar.

The larger man shrugged and collected his broadsword from a friend. Shouting their approval, the assembled vikings crowded closer. Jun climbed atop a nearby barrel for a better view.

The combat had already begun, Ragnar and Sigard circling warily. Suddenly Ragnar rushed forward and brought his blade up in a violent swing easily parried by his opponent. Ragnar attacked again, only to be blocked by Sigard's shield.

As Ragnar leapt back, Sigard used the flat of his blade to clout the young warrior on his sword arm. Clutching his forearm to his chest, Ragnar spun—and suddenly came back, his sword arcing under Sigard's shield and into a gap in the mail on his side. The larger man grunted in pain, and Jun heard a cheer from somewhere in the crowd.

Ragnar closed with a flurry of blows as Sigard kept his shield clutched tight over his wound. Sigard finally managed to bring his broadsword around in a clumsy one-handed swing, and Ragnar dived under the blade and away.

Roaring with rage, Sigard threw his shield aside and rushed forward. For the next few moments, Jun watched Ragnar do his best to stave off a rain of hacking blows that visibly chipped the edges of his sword.

Finally Ragnar rolled to one side and leapt to his feet. Once again he and Sigard squared off, circling inside the ring of vikings. Suddenly Ragnar stopped and threw his sword aside. Sigard stood straight and grinned at the crowd. "He yields!" he shouted, as Ragnar stepped forward drove his fist directly into Sigard's jaw. The massive viking's head snapped back, and he wobbled for a moment as his broadsword fell from his hand. Then his eyes rolled and he slumped to the ground.

The assembled vikings fell silent as Ragnar retrieved his short sword and wiped it clean on his leather leggings. He turned to the crowd before speaking: "I am a viking warrior. I will never yield." Jun joined the crowd as it erupted in cheers, the vikings raising their weapons in salute.

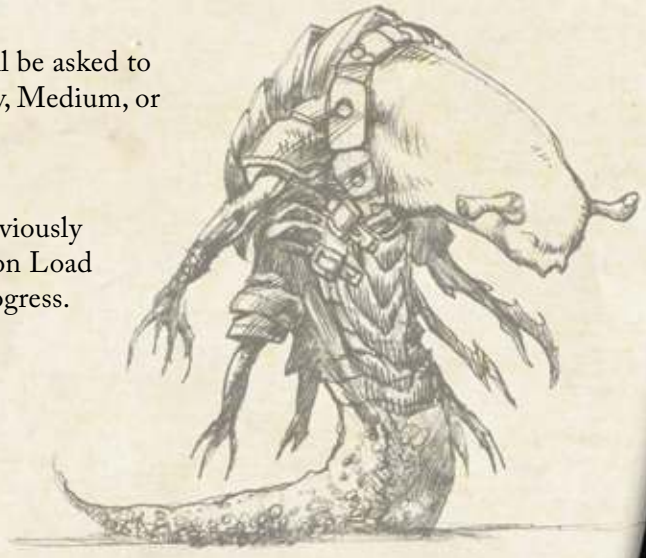
A warrior clad in both leather and mail stepped forward, longsword and dagger strapped to his hips and an enormous axe slung behind him. Boiled and stretched leather had been formed into guards that were strapped over his shoulders and reached almost to the edges of his helm. He raised his hands and waited for the cheers to calm. Finally he put his hand on Ragnar's shoulder and spoke. "As speaker for the thane, I declare the holmgang at an end. Ragnar has proven himself through combat, and will be recompensed with three silver marks. . . once his opponent awakens. With that, the closing of this matter shall be recognized by both gods and men. So say the Laws of Odin."

"I thank you, Gudrek, and I thank the gods," said Ragnar, nodding his head solemnly.

"But there is one more matter," said the thanesman, and Ragnar looked up, puzzled. Reaching into a pouch on his belt, Gudrek withdrew a medallion, a silver disk engraved with crossed sword and hammer inside a ring of runes. Jun noticed that both Gudrek and Sigard wore similar medallions, as did others in the crowd. "Ragnar's show of courage and ability against this village's most skilled warrior has this day earned him the greatest honor we can bestow." Ragnar bowed his head and Gudrek hung the medallion around his neck. "Today he takes his place among the greatest warriors of this tribe. Today he joins the Odinsblade!" As the assembled Vikings cheered again, Jun watched Sigard rise to his feet and angrily push his way into the crowd.

## Beginning the Adventure

**THE MAIN MENU**
Each time you launch RUNE, you'll be presented with the Main Menu screen. To return to this screen at any time while playing the game, press the Esc key. The Main Menu offers you the following options:



**New Game**
Begin a new adventure. You will be asked to select a level of difficulty—Easy, Medium, or Hard-before the game begins.

**Load Game**
View games that have been previously saved. Select a game and click on Load to return to an adventure in progress.

**Save Game**
Save your game in progress. Choose an empty slot or an existing slot that you wish to overwrite. Name the slot, then click Save.

**Multiplayer**
Host, join, or observe a multiplayer game. For more information, see page 14.

**OPTIONS**
Change your settings to adjust and customize gameplay.

**Video/Audio:**
Set your video and audio preferences to adjust game performance.

**Game:**
Set options that will customize the game environment.

**Controls:**
Customize how the game controls map to your keyboard, mouse, and joystick.

**Input:**
Select your input devices, such as joysticks, mice, or keyboards.

**Exit:**
Lay down your weapons and leave RUNE.

## PART II

Only the warriors had been allowed in the ceremony, so Jun and Bragi resumed their wandering through Wotankeld. "I suppose it's not such a bad place," Jun said. "Nice, in it's own way." It certainly had a beautiful stave church, and as they studied its many carvings of gods and creatures, Bragi told Jun the stories and legends behind each of them.

They were just making their way back into the village when they heard the faint peal of a war horn. It was quickly joined by others, and Jun saw Gudrek step from a nearby longhouse. "To the pass!" he bellowed, and Viking warriors spilled from alleys and longhouses and made their way towards the gates.

The horns built and echoed off the peaks above the village as Jun and Bragi followed behind, and when they reached the mouth of the pass they found the warriors gathered around a dark-bearded man listening intently to a gasping runner. Gudrek pushed his way to the front of the crowd. "What's happened, my thane?"

The older man held up a hand to silence the thanes-man as the runner continued. "Conrack's men . . . They side with giant warriors . . . armed with strange, terrible weapons. Messengers down on. . . the beach." A viking handed the runner a skin of water and the thane sat on his haunches for a moment, fingering the charm that hung around his neck—a Hammer of Thor.

Finally he stood and turned to the vikings. "The Betrayer's men are raiding Kopperud. Many of you were with me in Utherby. Those of you who were not have heard the stories—villages in ruins, men and women alike hung with spikes and marked with strange symbols unlike any rune."

"Now Conrack's armies have come to our lands, and would attack those who lie under the protection of the runestones. With this news, and accounts of his forces, I begin to fear

that he has betrayed far more than the Laws of Odin. We cannot allow this to stand. I call upon the Odinsblade—to the ships!"

Vikings scattered to collect their weapons and armor. Jun turned to leave, but Bragi held her arm. She turned back to see Gudrek still at the thane's side. "Jurt, there's something I should tell you," he began, as the thane turned and saw Ragnar standing nearby, the silver medallion of the Odinsblade hanging around his neck.

"When did this occur?" asked the thane quietly. "After the holmgang," explained Gudrek. "With only a short sword, he nearly bested Sigard. I might have waited for a true trial, but with Conrack's men so near, we'll need every skilled warrior in the village at our side. . ." The thane walked to where Ragnar waited and placed his hand on his shoulder. "This will be more than a battle against some misguided peasants, Ragnar. From the tales we've heard, you could believe we are setting off to face the very forces of darkness."

"I know, father," said Ragnar. "But you know I have trained with every weapon in this village since long before I was bearded." The young warrior dropped to one knee and held his sword before him. "In battle I will earn this honor. This you know, and this I swear."

Jun watched as the thane considered Ragnar for a long moment and then said, "Very well. Go collect my weapons and armor, and arm yourself with anything else you can find. Gudrek will not be able to command Conrack's men to grant you mercy."

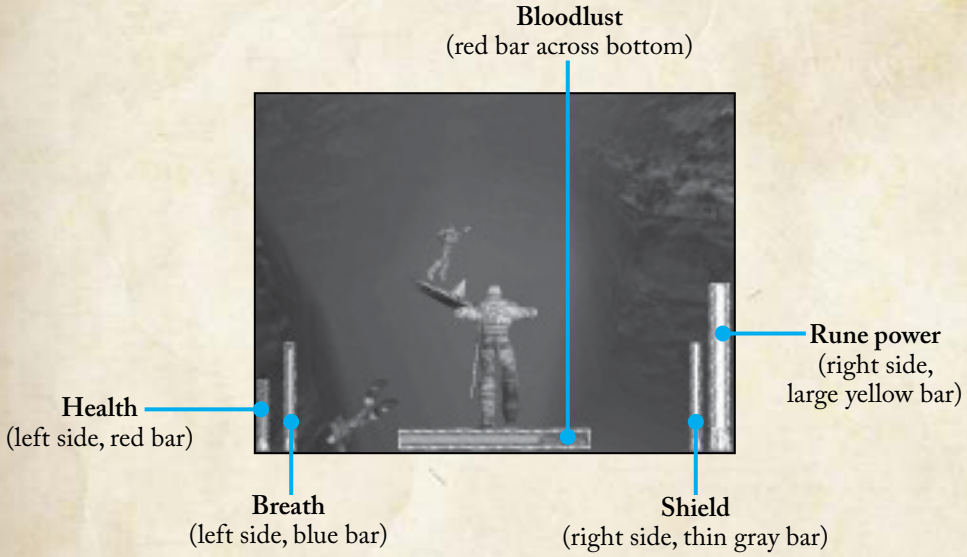
Thane and thanesman watched as Ragnar dashed off. "He cannot be a true member of the Odinsblade until he passes the trial, Gudrek," said the thane. "Do you understand what you've done? If my son is lost in battle today, he will not be recorded on the stones."

"He will be on the stones, Jurt," Gudrek said. "He is young, but one of the most skilled warriors I've ever seen. It will be his deeds recorded, not his death."

The thane began his walk down the pass. "I only hope the gods agree."

# The Way of the Viking

**HUD–Heads-Up Display:**
As you journey through the world of RUNE, gauges along the edges of the screen will provide you with information about Ragnar's health and abilities:




**Health:**
Indicates Ragnar's physical condition; the lower the bar, the closer Ragnar is to death.

**Shield:**
How much more damage Ragnar's shield can take before it shatters.

**Rune power:**
The amount of rune power Ragnar can call upon. See page 13 for more information.

**Breath:**
Ragnar has the mighty lungs of a viking, but if he doesn't surface or find a pocket of air before this bar empties, he may suffer the ignominious death of drowning.

**Bloodlust:**
As Ragnar kills his enemies, his bloodlust will rise. When the bar fills, Ragnar will go beserk. While beserk, any damage Ragnar takes will come off his bloodlust rather than his health.

**Weapons:**
Ragnar will discover many weapons that he can pick up and use throughout his journey—more than a dozen in all. They will fall into three categories: Bashing Weapons, Swords, and Axes. Each category has its own assigned control key, and pressing the key will draw the weapon of that category that Ragnar is wearing at the ready. Pressing the control key again will cycle through all weapons Ragnar possesses of that type. To empty his hands, hit the Stow Weapons key.

*Swords*

**Viking Short Sword:** Vampiric Attack: Any damage to enemies gives Ragnar a small boost to his health.

**Roman Sword:** Blaze: Causes a ring of fire to blast out around Ragnar, setting any nearby enemies on fire.

**Viking Broad Sword:** Ally: Any enemies hit with this attack are allied with Ragnar and will fight to the death to protect him.

**Dwarf Work Sword:**
Lightning: Summons a great mass of electrical energy that zap any nearby foes.

**Dwarf BattleSword:** Avalanche: Launches giant boulders to smite Ragnar's enemies.

*Axes*

**Goblin Axe:** Ghost Throw: Briefly throw out ghostly versions of the axe.

**Viking Axe:** Magic Shield: Summons a large magic shield.

**Sigurd's Axe:** Freeze: Any struck enemies are frozen solid. Ready to be smashed to bits!

**Dwarf Battle Axe:** Massive Damage: Any hits with a powered-up Battle Axe turns enemies into bloody bits.

*Hammers*

**Rusty Mace:** Shockwave: Creates a shockwave radius blast around Ragnard that knocks back nearby enemies.

**Bone Club:** Sonic Blast: Emits a wave of sound that knocks back and damages any enemies in front of Ragnar.

**Trial Pit Mace:** Invisibility: Ragnar becomes invisible for a brief period of time.

**Dwarf Work Hammer:** Earth Attack: Smashes the ground and sends out a ground-based blast ahead of Ragnar.

**Dwarf Battle Hammer:** Turn to Stone: Any enemies hit by this are instantly turned to stone.

**Attacking:**
When Ragnar is wielding a weapon, pressing the Attack key will cause Ragnar to make a single swipe with the weapon. Properly timing a second use of the Attack key will allow Ragnar to make a double swipe with the weapon. Smaller weapons—and practice—will even allow for triple- and quadruple-strokes!

**Throwing weapons:**
Weapons can also be thrown, if Ragnar wants to attack from a distance. But beware-his enemies may pick up the weapons and use them against him.

**Running attacks:**
Ragnar's movement affects how he uses his weapons. Practice moving Ragnar forward, backward, from side to side, and even jumping in various directions while using his full array of weaponry-combinations

of timing and movement will allow for the optimum use of weaponry. If Ragnar is swift and sure in his attack, he'll even be able to cleave off the limbs of his enemies. Strike an opponent in the same location repeatedly and you'll see damage accumulate in that area.

**Shields:**
Ragnar is also able to pick up and use shields dropped by his enemies. Whenever he has a shield, he will carry it in his left hand. As Ragnar approaches an enemy, he may hold his shield before him to ward off any attacks that are aimed at him. But as a shield absorbs attacks, the Shield bar on the HUD will drop; when it is gone, the shield will shatter.

**Food and Drink:**
If Ragnar has been injured, consuming food and drink of all sorts will refill the Health bar on the HUD. The resourceful viking will also hunt for animals and fruit along his path that will help him rebuild his strength.

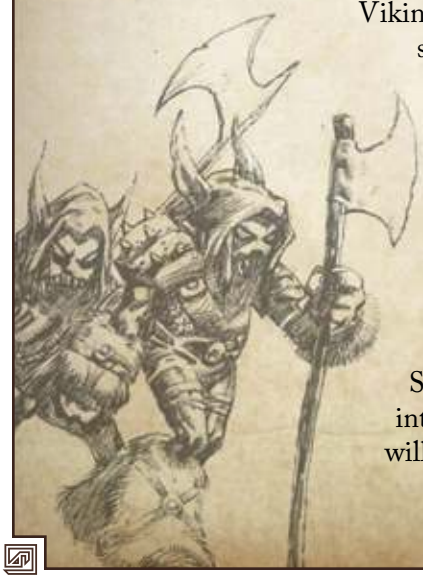
**Other Objects:**
Ragnar can interact with many of the other objects he will find in his journey. Torches will help him find the way through dark caverns—and be relit off anything that's burning. Chains and barrels can be broken. Ropes and vines can be climbed. Switches and plungers will activate earthworks and dwarven machinery, allowing Ragnar to control the environment for his benefit-and his enemies'detriment.

Some objects can be used as weapons or thrown. Others will be the key to puzzles Ragnar will encounter. Experiment with everything!

## Lessons of the Thane

The following are suggestions that may help you navigate Ragnar through the trials and dangers that await him:

Pay attention to what Ragnar is looking at, and you'll find him glancing toward anything that might be potentially interesting or dangerous in his general vicinity. If you get stuck, or don't know how to make it past an area or puzzle, follow Ragnar's instincts.



Vikings know that the best way to survive a fight is not to be struck by their opponents. Be sure to circle for position before closing in to strike.Remember that plants, animals, and the environment around Ragnar may be just as dangerous as his enemies.

A strong viking may be able to break down walls and wooden barriers, but he will find those bound or made with cold iron to be impassable.Different opponents will have different tactics when they attack and will require different tactics to defeat. Simpler creatures might be conquered by wading into their mass, but larger and smarter enemies will require more savvy.

Ragnar can use his shield to defend himself as he closes on his opponents, but he cannot attack while hiding behind his shield. Beware the many traps of the underworld: if Ragnar isn't wary, he might find himself caught in a cage, a pitfall, or worse. . .

Some creatures have a natural hatred for one another. In some cases, Ragnar may be able to avoid combat by manipulating his enemies into fighting one another.

## PART IIII

"We're following the vikings, right?" said Jun, though she knew Bragi led them toward the heart of the village. "Many others will be taking that path," said the old man, as a group of children hurried past them carrying sheaves of oats. "For now our place is here. There is still much you must see."

"But what about Ragnar?" she complained. "Shouldn't we find out what happens to him?" The old man paused. Concentrating, he reached out and placed his hand on Jun's forehead. She felt a sudden chill and closed her eyes.

Ragnar settled into a place at the oars. Two rows before him, his friend Alric mounted his shield over the gunwales and took up his own oar. Throughout the longship the village's bravest warriors checked their weapons and tightened their armor.

Mindful of his oath, Ragnar vowed that he would fight to the death against Conrack's raiders to prove his courage- to earn the medal of the Odinsblade and a place in the halls of Valhalla.

On the shore sat the tiny boat that had carried the messengers from Kopperud. Only one had survived, and he looked to be mumbling incoherently as a woman treated his wounds. Ragnar's father and Gudrek stood nearby, until the woman turned and shook her head.

Walking down the beach, Gudrek helped the thane aboard the longship. The thane took his place at the ship's prow, while the thanesman made his way to the rear of the boat and the steering board and barked, "Ready oars!"

Alric looked back at Ragnar and grinned. "Ready, warrior?"

The thane raised his axe. "To glory!" he cried. Pushing the ships through the crashing surf, the last warriors clambered over the sides. Then fourscore warriors pulled as one and the ships moved out to sea.

Jun's eyes snapped open. She was still in the village, near an amused Bragi. "I. . ." she stammered. "I could hear his thoughts like the waves on the shore! I could smell the sweat on his leathers, feel the planking beneath his feet! What. . ." The skald simply put a finger to her lips and

continued to smile. They walked in silence to where the villagers had gathered together around a roaring fire in the center of the village. Shielding her eyes from the flames, Jun looked past the fire and through a set of open gates. Beyond them was a small lake surrounding an island of rock, on which sat a circle of enormous stones covered with runes. And in the center of that circle was an even larger stone.

"The Runestone of Odin," whispered Bragi. "Cast down by Odin himself and a holy artifact to the people of this village and the surrounding land. Its wisdom has shaped viking law for generations. Around it the people have gathered stones to record their own history, to remember great deeds and to dedicate them to the Aesir."

An older man raised his arms and the murmuring crowd fell silent. "We call on the Aesir-on Odin, on Tyr. We call on Thor and Njord. Protect the warriors of this village as they enter your spheres, knowing their triumph is your glory." Villagers throughout the crowd whispered private prayers, then stepped forward with offerings to the gods-barley, oats, rye, a slaughtered goat and cast them into the flames. The crowd stood silently, and Jun joined them as they bowed their heads and closed their eyes.

Rowing to the rhythm of a war chant, Ragnar glanced over his shoulder at the horizon. Flashes of lightning illuminated dark clouds that rode across the surface of the ocean. Yet Kop-perud lay on the far side of the storm, and to reach the village before Conrack's army had razed it to the ground meant traveling through the storm's center. The breeze that had propelled them out from shore rose to a steady wind, and several men left their positions at the oars to tend the woolen sail that stretched above the ship. Strange, Ragnar thought. Usually the wind blew away from storms. . .

## Gifts from the Gods

The gods show their favor for warriors who have earned Valhalla with the gift of runestones scattered throughout its halls and battlefields. These runestones are much more than mere symbols—they are vessels of power that imbue the warrior who obtains them with a wide range of powerful abilities.

## Runestones

There are five types of runestones:

**Lesser Runestone:** Grants raw rune power to the warrior—the level of rune power in the rune power bar on the HUD will rise.

**Greater Runestone:** Grants full rune power and expands the warrior's ability to absorb rune power; the rune power bar on the HUD will become larger.

**Rune of Health:** Not only restores your character to full health, but raises their ability to soak up damage; the health bar on the HUD will become larger.

**Rune of Lesser Strength:** Raises your warrior's level of blood lust, bringing them closer to going berserk.

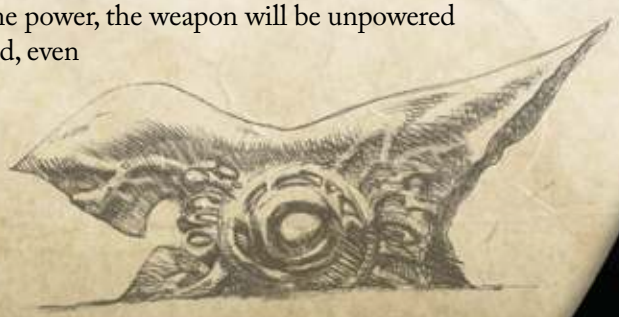
**Rune of Greater Strength:** Causes your character to automatically go berserk; the bloodlust bar on the HUD will fill, and while beserk, any damage your character takes will come off of the bloodlust bar rather than the health bar.

## Rune Powers

Every weapon that your character wields can be imbued with rune power to invoke powerful abilities, from the ability to throw an unlimited number of axes for a short period to the power to slam a mace into the ground and damage every enemy in your vicinity.

When wielding a weapon, you'll see an icon at the bottom of the rune power bar that hints at it's unique rune power. You'll also see an arrow on the side of the rune bar that indicates the minimum amount of raw rune power required to activate the weapon's ability.

Simply press the Activate Rune Power key to invoke the rune power of the weapon your warrior is currently wielding. Your stored rune power will begin to be drained and the power will remain active until your character either runs out of rune power or sheathes their weapon. If your character sheathes or throws a weapon while using a rune power, the weapon will be unpowered when redrawn or retrieved, even if done so immediately.



# Games of Valhalla

**Multiplayer Mode**
Whenever you're ready for battle against hordes of vikings from around Earth and across the Nine Worlds, simply select Multiplayer from the main menu and step onto the battlefields of Valhalla—via the Internet.

**Finding Other Players**
The multiplayer games of Halls of Valhalla are TCP/IP based, so multi-player matches can be played across Local Area Networks, modem connections (56K minimum recommended) or via the Internet. Click the Servers tab on the Join menu to see what Rune games can be automatically detected.

If none are detected, set up your own arena. Multiplayer games can be hosted on the computer of any participating player, or for better performance, on a dedicated computer. On the computer you want to host the game, select the Host menu and customize the arena, such as selecting the map and the rules mutators you want in play. Then wait for players to come join the battle!

# Multiplayer Games

Halls of Valhalla offers four distinct types of gameplay:

**Deathmatch**
A free-for-all battle to the death—and beyond. Points are awarded to players for each kill made on the battlefield. Depending on the rules chosen by the server, winners can be determined either by the first warrior to score a particular number of points or whichever warrior scores the most points in a set amount of time.

**Team Deathmatch**
Team Deathmatch remains a battle to the death, but you'll have a band of brave companions at your side. In the "Player" section of the Multiplayer menu, select a team (in Rune, teams are named after four colors—Red, Blue, Green, and Gold). Then, in the "Join" section, click on the Team Deathmatch tab to see a list of all available Team Deathmatch games.

Points are scored in Team Deathmatch when you kill members of the opposing team and count toward a team total. As in free-for-all Death-match games, a winner is determined either by the first team to reach a set score or the team who racks up the most points in a set time period.

**Arena**
A new multiplayer game in Halls of Valhalla¸ Arena pits warriors against one another in a test of their combat skills until only one remains standing. Basic Arena play is one-on-one dueling, but some maps and servers allow for larger teams—2-on-2, 3-on-3, etc.

When you enter an Arena game, equip yourself with weapons and shield and then get in the queue to enter the arena. A number floating

above your head will signify your place in line, and as warriors enter the arena you'll see it count down toward 1. When you reach the front of the line—1 for 1-on-1 matches, 1 and 2 for 2-on-2 matches, etc.—there will be a short countdown, after which you will be transported into the arena to challenge the champions of the previous battle.

Winners of Arena battles receive full health, and all equipment they brought into the arena is restored to them before the next battle.

**Headball**
A sport truly fit for viking warriors! Headball teams have only one goal: to score points by tossing the heads of their opponents through the arena's goals.

A Headball game begins with each team announcing that they are ready using a switch placed in the map for each team. Once all teams have checked in, a countdown beings, during which the players may move to wherever they believe will allow them the best starting advantage-though they cannot do damage to each other. However, once the starting gong has sounded, the melee begins! Combat can be used 'defensively' to simply slow the progress of the opposing team, or players can turn to 'offense' and aggressively go after their opponents, hoping for the killing blow of decapitation.

When a head is severed, any player can pick it up and make a run for goals placed around the map. Some maps have goals that can be used by any player to score, while others have team-specific goals. Variant maps have multiple goals where each scores a different number of points per head, with difficult to score goals (distant, or requiring trick shots) worth more points. Those who set up Headball servers can also select whether or not to throw limb scoring into the mix, where each limb tossed into a goal scores one point.

## Entering the Arena

**Players**
When joining a multiplayer battle, enter the name you want to be identified by in the arena, the skin you want to wear, and if playing a team-based game, which team you would like to join. Then pick an arena from the list of connected servers and join the fight!

**Spectators**
Another option is to observe others as they battle. Select the spectator character in the multiplayer menu and you will be able to enter the arena as an invisible, intangible observer. You will even be able to select the best perspective by flying around the arena. (Those hosting the multiplayer match may choose to limit the number of spectators that may enter a match, as spectators require the same amount of system resources as warriors participating in the battle.)

# The Way of the Gods:

**Playing Games on the Internet**

Though Rune and Halls of Valhalla portray combat between viking warriors, behind each sword is another person somewhere out on the Internet, a person playing a game. Games have rules, and Rune provides those basic rules in the form of the game loaded onto your computer. As these 'rules' are fixed, in the end they are the only ones that can be truly enforced.

However, the Internet is as varied as its innumerable users, and games played on the Internet are no different. When a Rune server is set up, a server administrator immediately begins to make alterations to the basic game-deciding how many kills win a deathmatch, for example. Other rule changes may be put into play via mutators or user-created maps. These rules changes, though they may have loopholes, are still fixed and difficult to break.

Yet a final type of rule change are those that exist only because they have been agreed upon by the server administrator and the players on the server, and these are "house rules". Whether it be an agreement to only use Bone Clubs in a particular deathmatch, or the decision that a particular section of a map is off limits, these rules are utterly unenforceable—at any time they can be broken. But so long as all players abide by them, they become another rule of gameplay.

Common courtesy when first entering a Halls of Valhalla server is to ask which rules and mutators are being used, and whether or not any house rules are in play. If a rule is being used with which you disagree, further courtesy is to either spectate (using Spectator mode; see above) until the rule is no longer in effect, or to leave and find another server with more agreeable rules.

House rules can be a complicated matter-for example, on many servers it is considered bad form to kill a player who is 'chatting' and has a word balloon floating over their head, but it is also considered a foul to begin chatting in the midst of combat as it can sometimes be construed as anattempt to unfairly escape an opponent. A feel for what is 'fair play' in a particular match or on a particular server can only be found by open and friendly discussion with the server administrator and other players.

In the basic play of Rune, chaotic combat with no rule but that of the sword, Human Head Studios hopes to have created a game that is great fun. But the ability to experiment with gameplay-to change the game by instituting basic rules changes and house rules-is the ability to tailor the experience of gameplay and make the world over in your own image. In playing the game, each player can rule their own world—and that's the way of the gods.

## Troubleshooting

**Rune-World.com**
The first place to look for patches, game mods, and answers to your questions is the official Rune website at **www.rune-world.com** or **www.humanhead.com**

Visit the site's message boards to find other online warriors and share your tales of Viking glory!

**Technical Support**
If you have a technical problem concerning the operation of Rune Classic, please contact our technical support staff at runeclassicsupport@ninerealms.net. When you write include the following information ready: type of computer, available hard drive space, total RAM, type of video card, and a list of the options you selected when you installed the game.

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